

May 14, 2010

St. Louis Globe-Democrat

Congressman Russ Carnahan (D-3rd District) will hold a workshop Friday afternoon on trade and economic development with Missouri businesses and German lawmakers visiting the region. Local businesses are expected to attend the event, which will focus on how St. Louis-based companies can expand their business opportunities through the already strong trade relationship that exists between Missouri and Germany.

“Getting people back to work immediately and building a strong regional economy for the long-term remain my top priority,” said Carnahan. “One of the ways we can achieve these goals is to help local businesses tap into global export markets that can help them grow, expand, and hire more workers. Missouri, and especially St. Louis, has a strong trade relationship with Germany that we can build upon to help expand economic opportunities and grow jobs here at home.”

The German-American trade workshop will feature presentations from Dr. Klaus Scharioth, German Ambassador to the United States; Fred Irwin, President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany, which helps U.S. companies tap into business opportunities in Germany; Gilles Cottier, President of SAFC, the fine chemicals custom manufacturing and services business division of Sigma-Aldrich Corporation; and Tom Drazen, President and General Manager of Schattdecor, a German-owned company that is constructing a new facility in St. Louis County that will create 107 permanent manufacturing jobs for the region.

According to Carnahan, Germany is the United States’ fifth largest trading partner, and in 2008 Germany ranked 6th among countries purchasing goods from Missouri. Germany is a leading consumer of Missouri’s chemicals, machinery, transportation equipment, electrical equipment, and computer/electronic products, and German-owned affiliates provide 16,100 jobs and 10,200 manufacturing jobs in Missouri, he added.

Friday’s event is part of a two-day visit to the St. Louis region by members of the German Bundestag, or Parliament, the German Ambassador to the United States, and other officials that was organized by the Congressional Study Group on Germany, which Carnahan chairs.

Carnahan said the study group is a project of the United States Association of Former Members of Congress, a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting public service and strengthening representative democracy domestically and abroad.

*2010 © St. Louis Globe-Democrat. All rights reserved.*